APPENDIX E
AIR FORCE TARGETING CONSIDERATIONS

Air Force targeting is a continuous cyclical six-step process that is similar to the decide, detect, deliver, and assess methodology used by the Army. Air Force targeting uses an analytical, systematic approach that focuses targeting effort on supporting operational planning and facilitates force employment.

THE SIX STEPS OF AIR FORCE TARGETING

The following six steps form the framework of Air Force targeting. They are discussed in greater detail in AFPs 200-17 and 200-18.

Objectives and Guidance

The guidance received and objectives stated by the commander will provide the basis for the targeting process. This is the first step in the targeting process and leads targeting personnel in selecting targets for attack.

Target Development

Target development is the systematic evaluation of potential target systems and their components. It is used to determine which elements of military action should, or could, be used against the targets to achieve the stated objectives.

Weaponeering Planning

Weaponeering planing is the process of determining how much of a specific weapon is required to achieve a specified level of damage to a target. Both lethal and nonlethal weapons are considered.

Force Application Planning

Force application planning is planning the optimum attack, with regard to existing resources, or specific targets. It takes into account all of the following:

- Target.

- Weapon system.

- Munitions.

- Nonlethal force options.

The result of the force application planning produces input to the ATO or strike packages.

Execution Planning

During the execution planning step, all planning necessary for the implementation of force application recommendations is made. This includes the preparation of inputs for the following:

- ATO.

- OPORDs.

- OPLANs.

- Immediate target taskings.

Combat Assessment

Combat assessment is assessing mission effectiveness and determining the need for any restrikes.

AIR OPERATIONS CENTER

The AOC is the senior agency of the Air Force TACS. It is task-organized to do the following:

- Provide centralized planning and control.

- Facilitate decentralized execution of air and air defense operations in theater.

When the AFFOR is designated as the JFACC, his AOC hosts the JAOC. The JAOC develops and executes the joint air tasking order (joint ATO). If the JFACC is also designated the ACA, his JAOC develops the ACO. Generally, the JAOC works on three separate joint ATOs at any one time:

- Executing the current day's plan.

- Coordinating and publishing the plan for operations the following day.

- Planning and conducting initial coordination for the following day.

The AOC (or JAOC) is the agency used by the commander air forces (COMAFFOR) (or JFACC) to centralize the functions of planning, direction, and control over committed air resources. The AOC functions at the component or force level. The AOC provides the COMAFFOR (JFACC) with the capability to--

- Supervise the activities of assigned or attached forces.

- Monitor the actions of both enemy and friendly forces.

The AOC has the capability to control joint and combined force air assets.

A deployed AOC integrates equipment and cadre personnel from the staff and component organizations of a general-purpose numbered air force (NAF). AOC manning is based on a cadre concept. Personnel are selected for the battle management expertise and knowledge of C^2 concepts and procedures. The cadre personnel are augmented by specialists with in-depth knowledge applicable to the current operation. Specialists will advise on the current capabilities and tactics of each of the aircraft, intelligence, or weapon systems being employed. In this way, the AOC is tailored to respond to the real world demands of the current operation.

As the senior agency of the Air Force TACS, the AOC (or JAOC) in executing the air attack portion ground operations performs the following tasks:

- Planning.

- Coordinating.

- Monitoring.

- Surveillance.

- Control reporting.

The AOC and the ASOC are the elements of the TACS most directly involved in the Air Force component and joint targeting process. The AOC must have survivable, secure communications links with operations, logistics, and intelligence centers. The AOC must also have the same dependable communications with appropriate elements of higher and lateral headquarters, subordinate units, and subordinate TACS elements.

The AOC is charged with preparing and issuing detailed orders for Air Force employment and managing mission execution.

At the same time, the AOC must maintain the flexibility to manage short notice changes dictated by changing situations. The AOC is tailored to perform a variety of missions and management functions. Each function has unique information and decision-making needs that call for many different levels of experience and personal expertise. Many contingency operations will not need equal attention to C^2. For this reason, manning, communications, and configuration will vary greatly in deployed AOCs. The AOC must perceive and understand the current situation to make timely and effective decisions for employment of air assets essential to battle management. This is the most critical activity of the AOC. It may ultimately decide the success or failure of theater air forces in achieving their planned objectives.

AIR FORCE AOC FUNCTIONS

As stated, the AOC can be tailored to perform a variety of missions and management functions. Regardless of the particular contingency, the AOC performs three basic management functions:

- Flight management.

- Battle management.

- Systems management.

Flight Management

The flight management function consists of the following two parts:

- Formalizing the mission schedule in an ATO.

- Monitoring and tracking the progress of each tasked mission to include relaying any changes to affected control agencies or flying units.

Battle Management

The battle management function of the AOC is defined as decisions and actions taken in direct response to the presence or activities of enemy forces. The battle management function is the most critical activity in the AOC. It may ultimately decide the successor failure of forces in the theater to achieve assigned objectives.

Systems Management

In the AOC, emphasis is placed on the smooth operation and interface between all elements of the TACS. Airspace management and communications management are normally subsets of this function. Some of the major concerns of the AOC in this functional area are the timely exchange of C^2 information such as--

- ATOs.
- Order of battle information.
- Scrambles.
- Threat alerts.
- Air logistical status.

AIR FORCE AOC ORGANIZATION

The AOC is composed of functional elements responsible for the following areas:

- Operations.
- Intelligence.
- Logistics.
- Communications-electronics.
- CSS.

AOC organization may vary somewhat between unified commands; however, all AOCs perform these five basic functions. The size of the C^2 organization needed in a joint operation depends largely on the size of the forces (land, sea, and air) involved. Initially, the AOC may simply guide the arrival and positioning of air resources and conduct the supporting plans and agreements necessary for their continued support and operations. During a contingency operation, the Air Force component could range in size from a single squadron to numerous wings. The size of the resulting AOC might vary. It could be maintained as a limited capability referred to as the quick response package (QRP). The manning might need to be expanded to a level called the limited response package (LRP). Also, the AOC may be staffed and equipped at the fully operational level required by operations such as Operation Desert Storm. Organizations of this size are called theater response packages (TRPs). Whatever the size of the force involved, the senior Air Force commander must have one central system to exercise control over his forces.
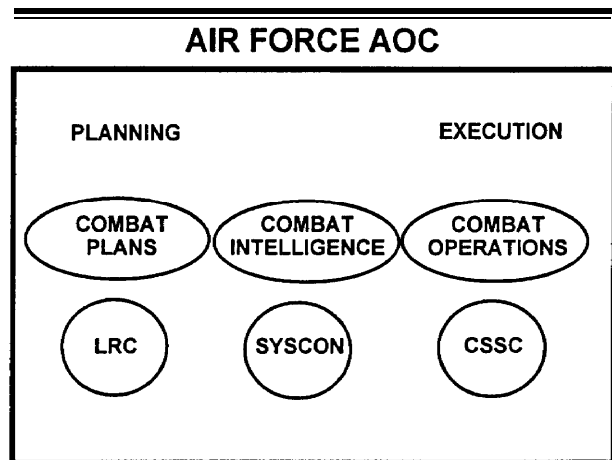
When constituted, a typical AOC consists of an AOC director and six functional elements:

- Combat plans division (CPD).
- Combat operations division (COD).
- Combat intelligence division (CID).
- Systems control center (SYSCON).
- Logistics readiness center (LRC).
- Combat service support center (CSSC).

In addition, a director of mobility forces (DIRMOBFOR) maybe assigned to the JFACC staff as a liaison from the AMC. Even though external to the AOC, the DIRMOBFOR may be authorized to coordinate directly with the ALCC in the AOC for airlift matters.

The illustration below shows the elements and their relationships to one another in the AOC.

AIR FORCE AOC

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE AOC

Each element in the AOC has duties or responsibilities to perform as the AOC provides the supporting air effort to the theater. The following paragraphs discuss the duties and responsibilities of the elements in the AOC.

AOC Director

The AOC director is typically the director of operations for the Air Force component. He is responsible for the centralized planning, directing, controlling, and coordination of air assets. He also has the same responsibility, theaterwide, with regard to surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) assigned, attached, or made available to the JFACC. The director is responsible to the COMAFFOR, who maybe the JFACC, for the tasking of all assigned air operations.

Combat Plans Division

The CPD is responsible for the air campaign planning function of the AOC. The CPD is typically divided into the following branches:

- Air campaign branch (ACB).
- Joint guidance, apportionment and targeting cell.
- ATO branch (ATOB).
- Airspace control branch.
- Plans intelligence branch.

The CPD develops the following:

- Air campaign strategy.
- Apportionment and allocation recommendations.
- ATO and related documents. For example CPD produces ACOs, target nomination list (TNL), tactical operations data (TACOPDAT), and operational tasking data link (OPTASKLINK) messages.

Combat Operations Division

The COD is responsible for execution of the current ATO. The COD is typically divided into the following elements:

- Offensive operations branch (OOB).
- Defensive operations branch (DOB).
- Airspace control branch.
- Weather support branch (WSB).
- Operations intelligence.

The COD may also include a rescue coordination center (RCC) which supports or may be designated as the joint search and rescue center (JSRC).

Combat Intelligence Division

CID directs the activities of plans intelligence, operations intelligence, and intelligence support. Plans intelligence is physically and fictionally integrated with the CPD. The same relationship exists in regard to operations intelligence and the COD. CID coordinates tasking of the following organizations to support the intelligence requirements of the AOC:

- Air intelligence agency.
- Air Force information warfare center (AFIWC).
- Air combat command (ACC).
- Combatant (unified) command intelligence assets.

Systems Control (SYSCON) Center

The SYSCON directs the employment and linkage of Air Force communications-computer systems (C-CS) elements in the theater of operations. It may also be assigned SYSCON responsibilities for a theater joint network. The SYSCON consists of the following elements:

- Site management branch.
- Operations control branch.

- System administration branch (SYSAD).
- Deployed systems support branch
- Total risk assessment cost estimate (TRACE) team/engineering branch.

Logistics Readiness Center

The LRC is the single focal point for all air-dated logistics issues within a theater of operations. It is responsible for centralized direction and control of deployment, reception, and deployment of logistical assets, and execution of logistics functions. The LRC also supervises logistics actions relating to the following:

- Mobility.
- Operations.
- Aircraft serviceability.
- Munitions.
- Aerospace ground equipment.
- Readiness spares packages.
- POL.

The LRC consists of the following branches:

- Logistics plans branch.
- Aircraft maintenance branch.
- Supply/fuels branch.
- Transportation branch.
- Contracting branch.

Combat Service Support Center

The CSSC is responsible for theater *beddown* support functions. The CSSC consists of the following branches:

- Engineering branch.
- Personnel branch.
- Services branch.
- Security police branch.
- Medical branch.
- Information management branch.

> **Note.** For a more detailed discussion of the AOC, see Air Combat Command Instruction 13 (ACCI 13).